

WILDLIFE • CONSERVATION • PEOPLE • TRAVEL

AFRICA[®] *Geographic*

JUNE 2012

10 ECO-SAVVY
QUESTIONS
TO ASK YOUR
LODGE

MEDICAL AID FOR
GORILLAS

destination
AFRICA
THE POTENTIAL & PITFALLS OF TOURISM



RSA R45 (including VAT)
PRINTED IN THE UK
DIGITAL 822340 (excluding VAT)
www.africageographic.com



p14 SAVUTE'S CARNIVORES

**EDWARD
NORTON**
ON AFRICA,
ECOTOURISM &
GREENWASHING



p26



p22 RHINO UPDATE

FEATURES

26 STAR POWER Actor Edward Norton is no stranger to Kenya, where a truly collaborative conservation initiative prompted him to become a patron of the Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust.

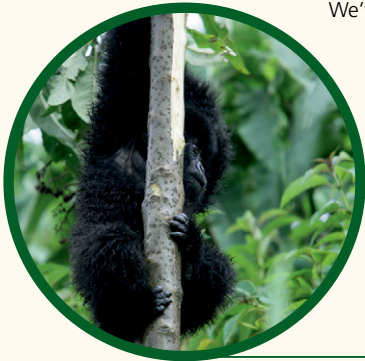
32 BE ECO-SAVVY It's easy for lodge operators to say that their enterprise is environmentally responsible, but sometimes it pays to dig a little deeper. We've put together 10 pertinent questions to ask...

48 KICK-STARTING THE CONGO

The president of the Republic of Congo wants to see 10 per cent of his country's GDP come from tourism. It's a big ask, but a start is being made at Odzala-Kokoua National Park.

56 GORILLAS IN OUR MIDST

For many humans, seeing the mountain gorillas of Rwanda is a life-enhancing experience. Unfortunately, though, it's not only our enthusiasm that's infectious.



AROUND AFRICA

- 12 ON GUARD** Donkeys are the new dogs for protecting large livestock in Namibia.
- 14 SAVUTE STANDINGS** Leopard, lion, spotted hyaena, cheetah, African wild dog – each has its place in the Savute hierarchy of large predators.
- 16 SEX EDUCATION** Why, wondered scientists, do some elephant cows show all the signs of being ready to mate when they're not in oestrus?
- 16 SECOND TIME AROUND** A young leopard shows off her second litter.
- 18 WATER FIGHT** Lioness meets crocodile in the Okavango Delta.
- 20 REBUILDING A BOND** Conflict between humans and elephants is a new trend in Tanzania's Udzungwa region, and one that scientists are doing their best to discourage.



REGULARS

- 2 FOUNDER'S NOTE**
- 4 EDITORIAL & CONTRIBUTORS**
- 6 VIEWPOINT**
- 7 INTERACTIVE** Keep up to date with our digital world.
- 8 AFRICA AT A GLANCE**
- 10 ROUNDUP & ASK US!**
- 17 IAN MICHLER'S DIARY** The return of seals to Robberg is celebrated by some – but not the fishermen.
- 22 RHINO WATCH** Keeping abreast of the latest news, views, updates and debates.
- 67 52 ARTWORKS** The work of wildlife artist Noel Ashton.
- 69 SIGNING OFF** If triage were to be implemented in conservation in Africa, where would we begin?
- 80 TRACKING BACK** Setting sail across Africa's deepest lake.

OUR COVER

36 DESTINATION: AFRICA



In view of Africa's breathtaking natural wonders, it's bewildering that the continent garners only three per cent of the world travel market. We showcase just a fraction of what the other 97 per cent is missing.

Elephant *Loxodonta africana*
Photograph: Greg du Toit/www.gregdutoit.com

TRAVEL WITH US

35 BE QUICK TO TAKE ONE OF THE LAST REMAINING PLACES ON OUR TRIP TO THE MASAI MARA MIGRATION.

63 YOU'VE READ ALL ABOUT IT – NOW SIGN UP FOR OUR ADVENTURE INTO THE CONGO!

SUBSCRIBE

66 DON'T MISS A SINGLE INSTALMENT OF OUR – AND YOUR – EXPLORATION OF AFRICA AND ITS MANY MARVELS.

READER EVENTS

19 COME AND LISTEN TO THE EXPERTS.

YOU CAN WIN...

- 6 AN AFRICA GEOGRAPHIC FLEECE.**
- 10 A PAIR OF LYNX BINOCULARS.**
- 67 A LIMITED-EDITION PRINT OF AN ARTWORK BY NOEL ASHTON.**

kick-starting the Congo, page 48



Of wild dogs & warthogs

On an early morning drive in the Vumbura area of the Okavango in northern Botswana, we spotted a group of African wild dogs at rest near a small water-hole. Among them were the 15 pups born the previous winter. One very fidgety adult male could not sit still and, sure enough, it was he who initiated the attack on a warthog that came trotting blithely by. The restless dog was instantly on its heels, with an intent that seemed more playful than lethal – until he fastened onto a foot. Suddenly everything changed. A surge of dogs, including the pups, burst out of cover and the chase was on.

Very careful to avoid the warthog's wicked tusks, the dogs tore into its rear end. The warthog seemed almost resigned to its fate and did not attempt to turn around and face its assailants. Several times they brought it down and it struggled back to its feet, but already they had begun to disembowel it. Its distressed squealing, all but drowned out by the twittering of the pups, finally stopped and the division of the spoils began. *Nick Galpine, via e-mail*



JULIET LEMON



winning letter

For his letter about the wild dog hunt, **Nick Galpine** wins an Africa Geographic fleece jacket.

Animals enslaved

I am writing in response to 'Think before you walk', Ian Michler's excellent column in the December 2011/January 2012 issue. It is pleasing to read such a forthright article that sheds light on the commercial enterprises that feed off people's emotional desire to 'pet' and get 'up-close' to wild animals. Leaving aside the points made by Ian, and indeed the issue of safety, there is another aspect to this subject: the concept of animal slavery.

A court in the US recently agreed to examine whether killer whales at SeaWorld San Diego are entitled to be protected from slavery. The lawsuit invokes the 13th Amendment to the US constitution, which abolished 'slavery or involuntary servitude' in the country. Being forced to live in tanks and perform daily could certainly be construed as slavery. It is not thought likely that the whales will win their freedom, but the case does raise some interesting philosophical questions for the providers of the close-encounter experiences that Ian mentions. All in the name of 'entertainment'. *Patrick Brakspear, Australia*

WRITE TO US

Africa Geographic, P O Box 44223, Claremont 7735, Cape Town.
 Fax +27 (0)21 762 2246/086 541 6127 (South Africa only);
 e-mail leni@africageographic.com

You are welcome to submit your contribution to 'Viewpoint', restricting it to no more than 200 words. Submissions may be edited for reasons of space. We are not able to acknowledge the receipt of submissions, nor to reply in each instance. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Publisher.

Extreme solution

I wish to commend *Africa Geographic* on the April issue, which was dedicated to the desperate plight of our rhinos. Will we as grandparents feel comfortable saying to the following generations, 'Well, I'm sorry, but we did very little (in fact, nothing) to save this magnificent animal. Here is a picture of one, but they were all killed for their horns.' I certainly don't want to be counted among those apologists.

I completely agree with Charles van Niekerk that the solution lies in poisoning the rhino horns and allowing them to end up with the Chinese or Vietnamese distributors or users. It will take only one or two incidents of death or serious illness for South African rhino horn to be considered unusable. After a while we would only need to make it look as though the horn has been injected with poison and potential users will be scared off. We would also have to make it very clear to the Chinese and Vietnamese that the horns have been poisoned. Some people will scream about ethics and moral values; I say, to hell with morality. Does the world scream when US authorities shoot drug pushers on the Mexican border? When the *last* rhino has been killed, are those who talk about ethics going to shoulder some blame?

Dr Okori said that this method targets the end-user: without an end-user, we would have no problem.

Rob Archibald, Somerset West, South Africa



ED'S PICTURE OF THE MONTH

Technically, I don't think this is the most brilliant image from a lighting and focus point of view, but the intensity of the moment is captured so well. It calls to mind Rudyard Kipling's Rikki-Tikki-Tavi, the brave mongoose that defends a human family from the attention of two cobras. Obviously this is a meerkat and not a mongoose, but you can almost see the suricate marshalling its courage to face down the magnificent Cape cobra.

'This image was taken while I was on a volunteering project in the Kuruman River Reserve near the Botswana border. We had to follow the meerkats on foot and had quite a few interesting encounters.' Eva Corinne Kiefer

The Africa Geographic blog is live!

Africa Geographic's hot new blog is here, bringing you more of all the things we love about this magazine: wildlife, conservation, people and travel. Lose yourself in fantastic photographs, read interviews, breaking news and opinions and follow the offerings of our esteemed regulars Ian Michler, Tim Jackson and Grant Atkinson. There are loads of talented, passionate new contributors too. Find them here: <http://blog.africageographic.com/africa-geographic-blog/>

YOU LIKED THIS



'This was one of those moments when I realised that, whatever the cost, we have to protect this awesome species. The symbolic incident captured in this photo sparked so many feelings: hope, sadness, grief, excitement, anger, a sense of anticipation and even desolation! Over 100 rhinos have been killed so far this year. Will the rhino be able to escape senseless slaughter in the same way that this one escaped the stalking lions?' Bridgena Barnard

WATCH THIS



Baby elephant learns to use its trunk

'So, I've got this long thing on my face ... but I have absolutely no idea what I'm supposed to do with it!'

Watch how this little elephant learns to navigate its trunk here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLu7LIiqoS8

WARNING: May contain large doses of cuteness.

VISIT US ONLINE

Finished reading your latest issue of Africa Geographic from cover to cover? Looking for more? Join us on Facebook, Twitter and the blog for a daily dose of up-to-date news, information and great photography.

To submit your favourite wildlife photo for 'Picture of the day', e-mail cindy@africageographic.com and look out for it on our home page at africageographic.com

facebook.com/Africa.Geographic • twitter.com/africageo



ask us!



SCIENCE EDITOR

Tim Jackson

answers your questions about Africa's wildlife.

Q While driving along the main road between Lower Sabie and Crocodile Bridge camps in South Africa's Kruger National Park recently, I noticed three rhino middens within a distance of about one kilometre, each as close to the road as possible. Would all three middens mark the territory of a single animal? And does their proximity to the tarred road have any significance, in that it represents an easily identifiable boundary? *David Babbin, Gauteng*

A Rhino middens are certainly a commonly seen feature on that particular road and your questions regarding their role as territory markers are interesting. For some answers I turned to Adrian Shrader of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, whose doctoral study focused on white rhino behaviour and who still researches rhinos with his students. 'Middens are used by all white rhinos – males, females, young, old – and not just the territorial bulls, so you shouldn't think of them strictly as territory markers,' he explains. 'In fact, you'll see them in any areas that rhinos often visit. They'll be along game paths, next to waterholes or in the animals' favourite grazing areas.'

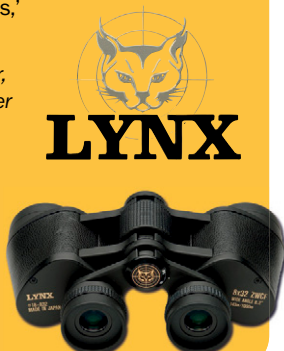
But that doesn't mean that the piles of dung can't serve as territory markers too. 'Middens found along territory boundaries are generally very large – more than four metres across,' Shrader continues. 'To check whether a territorial bull has used a midden, look for two parallel scrape marks in it. He makes these lines as he kicks back with his hind legs to spread his dung further.'

As for the significance of roads, Shrader offers some insight here too. 'White rhinos walk along roads just as they do along game paths, but their territory boundaries are not defined by stretches of tar – or any other physical features. So the middens on the Kruger Park road are unlikely to be part of such a boundary. My guess is that they are simply located within one or perhaps two territories,' he says.

It seems that urine (and the scent it leaves behind) rather than dung is key to defining the domain of a male rhino. 'Males mark by spraying urine in short, pulsed bursts. They do this all over their territories, but predominantly along the borders,' concludes Shrader.

If you have a question about animal behaviour, e-mail it to leni@africageographic.com, together with your postal address. Each month Tim will answer one of the questions submitted.

David Babbin wins a pair of Lynx Series-18 8x32 binoculars worth R2 910. With their high-grade, black leather covering, these small-bodied binoculars are ideal for wildlife enthusiasts and birdwatchers. Their Bak4 porro-prism glass and multi-coated optics provide excellent image clarity.



The first 'R' ...

TIM JACKSON

Baboons, it seems, are even smarter than we give them credit for; researchers in France have established that they can 'read' – or at least recognise four-letter words on a computer screen. After extensive training, the primates were able to distinguish between actual words and nonsense letter combinations.

Scientists John Grainger and Joel Fagot conducted the study at Aix-Marseille University, where 'the animals were completely free to participate and were automatically identified by the test computers when they quit their social group to enter one of the 10 test booths,' explained Dr Fagot, who designed the system. Inside a booth, a baboon faced a computer screen that displayed either a four-letter word or a jumble of letters. It earned a treat from the automated system if it correctly touched either a plus sign for the scrambled letters or an oval for a word.

'The monkeys paid maximum attention to what they are doing because they decided to participate,' elaborated Fagot. One baboon did particularly well, distinguishing up to 300 words.

According to Dr Grainger, recognising a sequence of letters can be associated with a more simple skill. 'The baboons used information about letters and the relations between letters in order to perform our task,' he said. 'This is based on a fundamental ability to identify everyday objects in the environment.' *Science*

Rhinos in Tanzania

In 'Rhino aid A-Z' of the April issue, we inadvertently relocated Mkomazi Game Reserve (now elevated to a national park) to Kenya. It is in fact located in northern Tanzania, and the George Adamson Wildlife Preservation Trust works closely with the national government on a number of projects there. You can read more about them at www.georgeadamson.org/mkomazi

RHINO

WATCH

news • views • updates • debates





Dawie Groenewald, Sariette Groenewald, Karel Toet and Marisa Toet at their second court appearance on 30 September 2011.

CONVICTIONS

(February 2011 to March 2012)

8 for the illegal possession of rhino horns.

4 for illegally dealing in rhino horns.

6 for the illegal hunting of rhinos.

In 12 of these cases, the accused were sentenced to jail without the option of a fine.

57 rhino-related cases are on the court roll.

161 people have been charged – 65 are in custody; 96 are out on bail.

Source: National Joint Operational Centre

GROENEWALD GANG: TWO STEPS FORWARD, ONE STEP BACK

On 9 May 2012, South Africa's Asset Forfeiture Unit (AFU) seized assets worth R55-million (US\$6.8-million) from suspected rhino poachers Dawie Groenewald and vets Karel Toet and Manie du Plessis. Groenewald, his wife and nine others were charged in September 2010 following the discovery of 20 rhino carcasses – without horns – on Groenewald's property. They are accused of illegal hunting, weapons and permit violations, unlawful trade in rhino horn, fraud and money laundering, and face 1872 official charges of racketeering. Should Groenewald, Toet and Du Plessis be convicted, the seizure will be realised and the proceeds used to fight crime.

For the National Joint Operational Centre, South Africa's coordinating body responsible for rhino-related crimes, the ability to seize assets is a key part of its anti-poaching strategy. 'We believe [it] will hurt the most. Generally, those that commit such crimes serve their sentences but still come back to a life of luxury ... by seizing assets, the criminals have no worldly possessions to enjoy,' it stated recently.

The case itself has been postponed – for the fourth time – to 19 October 2012. All 11 accused have been out on bail since their first court appearance on 22 September 2010 (ironically the first World Rhino Day), when Groenewald's bail was set at a record-breaking R1-million (US\$132 000). It was subsequently reduced by 90 per cent and, since the start of the case, Groenewald has continued to be issued with rhino-hunting and -relocation permits, while vets Toet and Du Plessis have assisted in the relocation of at least one rhino (a calf, whose mother was lost to poachers).



LEAP OF FAITH

When we first heard of the 'Skydive for Rhinos' campaign last year, it was with a fair degree of scepticism. Jumping out of a plane for the benefit of conservation seemed, well, a bit of a stretch to be honest. But all credit to Sheelagh Antroub and Micah van Schalkwyk (above), the Skydive for Rhinos team. Not only did their 40-person jump in August last year net R500 000 for anti-poaching initiatives, but they may well achieve their ambitious goal of raising R10-million in 2012. According to Van Schalkwyk, 'The core of the campaign aims to see at least 448 people (one for every rhino killed in 2011) tandem skydive at five drop-zones across South Africa.' If that's a little extreme for your blood, then you can buy an EISH! T-shirt (R15 goes to the ACT Rhino Fund), sponsor a Rhino Skydiver or Runner, or keep an eye on the campaign for other ways to get involved. E-mail funding@projectafrica.com or micah@projectafrica.com; tel +27 (0)33 342 2844; visit www.skydive4rhinos.org or find them on Facebook.

RHINO WATCH IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY





AWF/CRAIG R. SHOLLEY

REDUCING DEMAND

The African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) and WildAid have announced that they will develop and conduct a multimedia campaign in China to raise public awareness about rhinos, with the aim of dismantling black market demand for the horns. Although current research suggests that Vietnam is the primary destination of most horn leaving Africa, WildAid's experience in China provides a solid platform from which to launch the campaign. 'While real efforts are being made on the ground to halt the poaching, we also need to reach out to those who buy the horn and show them the damaging effects of their actions,' said Patrick Bergin, CEO of AWF.

WildAid has previously conducted public awareness campaigns in China, using Chinese celebrities such as action star Jackie Chan to educate the public about shark finning, tiger poaching and the other devastating effects of the wildlife trade. 'Our campaigns have reached hundreds of millions of Chinese people on a repeat basis,' says Peter Knights, WildAid Executive Director. 'The rhino campaign will build on this. The partnership with AWF also gives us the chance to reach Chinese people living or working in Africa.' The campaign will kick off with an online survey to assess awareness in Asia about Africa's rhino poaching situation. www.awf.org, www.wildaid.org

ALL TALK, ALL ACTION

In April 2012, 34 representatives from wildlife authorities in Africa's rhino range states, scientists, owners of private rhino reserves, experts in rhino trade and security and leading international conservation organisations attended a two-day summit in Nairobi to discuss a coordinated response to the rhino-poaching crisis. Sponsored by AWF and co-convened by the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), the summit came up with a comprehensive four-tier plan of action:

- Assisting rhino surveillance and anti-poaching units with new strategies, tools and resources, including better communication technology and vehicles.
- Strengthening law enforcement at both local and national levels. This includes using DNA profiling, harsher penalties and fines, and improved detection with, for example, sniffer dogs.
- Public awareness campaigns to curb rhino-horn demand and illegal trade (see 'Reducing demand').
- Reaching out to policymakers, financiers and government officials at the highest appropriate levels.

'Many organisations are doing worthwhile things to combat the rhino-poaching crisis. The aim of the summit was to bring together all of the relevant players to share best practices and lessons learned, and to add value to existing efforts,' said Julius Kipng'etich, director of KWS.



AWF/NOOR KHAMIS

Pelham Jones, chair of the Private Rhino Owners' Association in South Africa, offers his opinion on how security measures are working in the country's private reserves.

PRINT, PRESERVE, PROTECT

Last year in September, Konica Minolta South Africa announced that for every bizhub multifunctional printer it sells for the coming year, it will make a contribution to WWF's rhino conservation work. 'With the number of bizhubs sold last year, this will equate to a substantial donation that we hope will be well in excess of R1-million toward WWF's work in this area,' said Alan Griffith, managing director of Bidvest Group's Konica Minolta South Africa.



print.
preserve.
protect.

FACTS & FIGURES

210 rhinos killed (as at 7 May 2012) or 1.6 per day.

127 of these rhinos – more than half – were poached in the Kruger National Park.

128 arrests have been made in connection with rhino poaching (although just 31 are linked with the Kruger Park incidents).

Source: Department of Environmental Affairs

RHINO WATCH IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY



KONICA MINOLTA
SOUTH AFRICA

DNA profiling with KONICA MINOLTA SA

Africa Geographic scientific editor Tim Jackson recently paid a visit to the RhODIS lab at the University of Pretoria's Onderstepoort campus to catch up with recent rhino-related events.

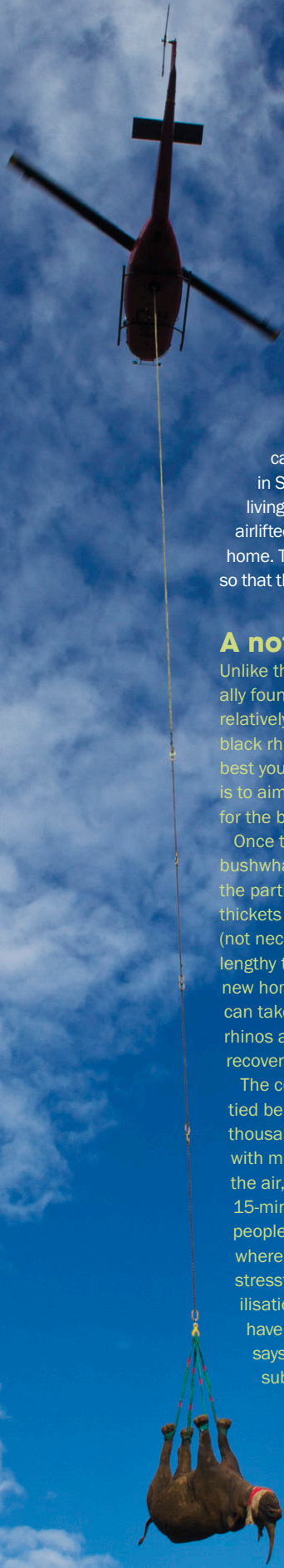


TIM JACKSON

'RhODIS is a project in the background, if you want to call it that; it's behind the scenes. But it's probably as important as the guys out there – the foot soldiers hunting down poachers. I really believe that,' says Alan Griffith, managing director of Bidvest Group's Konica Minolta South Africa. He is talking about the Rhino DNA Index System developed by Dr Cindy Harper (above) at the University of Pretoria's Veterinary Genetics Laboratory. The system uses genetic profiles to identify individual rhinos and is an important weapon in the arsenal against rhino poaching. Griffith was part of a Konica Minolta South Africa team on a fact-gathering visit to the RhODIS facilities. 'We want to hear more about what happens here so we can sell it a little more authoritatively to our main corporate customers,' he joked.

To date, Konica Minolta South Africa's support of rhino conservation, which tops the R900 000 mark, has resulted in significant gains, chiefly bringing East Africa's rhino range states on board. According to Dr Joseph Okori, head of WWF's African Rhino Programme, 'Firstly, the RhODIS system has now been fully ascribed as law in South Africa. Secondly, Kenya has formally agreed to get its entire rhino population on the RhODIS system. And thirdly, the Kenyan government has formally approved that the DNA RhODIS process is now part of law in Kenya, which means evidence can be used in court cases. To be honest, without Konica Minolta South Africa's support, this would not have been possible.'

Says Alan Griffith, 'We at Konica Minolta South Africa hope our support gives RhODIS the wherewithal to create a database that makes life almost impossible for people who want to trade in precious rhino horn.'



ONWARD AND UPWARD

With just 4 800 individuals remaining, black rhinos have been the focus of a coordinated management strategy that involves keeping breeding rates as high as possible to boost population growth. One way of doing this is to periodically 'harvest' animals from reserves that are reaching their maximum carrying capacity and relocate them to new areas. Earlier this year in South Africa's Eastern Cape province, 15 black rhinos living in inhospitable (to humans anyway) terrain were darted, airlifted to waiting transport trucks and relocated to a new home. The animals were carefully selected by age and sex ratio so that they could establish a new breeding population.

A note on the delivery method

Unlike their more placid white counterparts, which are generally found in open savanna and (for an experienced pilot) are relatively easy to manoeuvre by helicopter towards a road, black rhinos tend to be found in inaccessible habitats. 'The best you can do from the air when immobilising a black rhino is to aim it in the desired direction, place the dart and hope for the best,' says veterinarian Andre Uys.

Once the rhino is immobilised, reaching it involves a lot of bushwhacking from the ground crew who then have to walk the partially revived pachyderm back through hostile thorn thickets to the transport truck at the nearest access point (not necessarily a road). Once in the crate, the animal faces a lengthy trip over often-appalling terrain before its journey to a new home begins. Recoveries like this require big teams and can take a full day (if indeed they happen at all – many black rhinos are revived without being moved an inch because recovery is too dangerous or difficult).

The concept of moving a rhino by suspending it in a sling tied beneath a helicopter stems from the safe lifting of thousands of elephants, as well as a few rhinos, by their feet with mobile cranes. Once the rhino has been darted from the air, a vet and single crew member prepare it for a 10- to 15-minute flight to the recovery vehicles, where a handful of people guide it to the ground and into the transport crate, where it is fully revived. The slinging eliminates hours of stressful bundu bashing and drastically reduces the immobilisation time. In the past two years, about 70 black rhinos have been captured and translocated using this method and, says Uys, it is apparent that they are much calmer during the subsequent transportation. *Pete Oxford*

PETE OXFORD